

Appl. No.: 10/627,935

Reply to Office Action of: October 18, 2004

Remarks

Claims 1-5 and 7-15 are pending in this application. Claims 1-5 and 7-13 stand rejected, claim 6 was canceled, and claims 14 and 15 are withdrawn from consideration. The following remarks are addressed to the Office Action dated October 18, 2004.

Claim Rejections

Claims 1-2 and 4-5, and 7-13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Grunau (U.S. Patent No. 4,375,011) in view of Law (U.S. Patent No. 4,900,068).

Applicants respectfully contend that claim 1 as amended is allowable because it includes a feature that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references, namely "an interlocking anti-rotation element integrally formed in said seal." Grunau uses an anti-rotational bushing 18 (see Col. 2, lines 5-8) that is not integrally formed in a resilient tubular seal. Law provides a clip 18 with fingers for axial retention of a non-metal conduit for retention of the conduit (see Col. 2, lines 62-66 and Col. 3, lines 9-13). Law discloses keyways formed in the clip that interact with keys on the shoulder 14 of the body 11. However, the clip of Law is not a seal. Rather, the liquid-tight, gas-tight joint in Law is formed by an interference fit between the conduit and a ferrule (see Col. 2, lines 51-56). The other references fail to provide what Grunau and Law lack -- an interlocking anti-rotation element integrally formed in a resilient substantially tubular seal.

In the Office Action dated October 18, 2004, the Examiner concedes that Law does not teach an anti-rotational element integrally formed in the seal. The Examiner then argues that Law teaches an element having an anti-rotational element integrally formed on the back surface of the element, and that an anti-rotational element as taught by Law would provide a better seal device with fewer parts and less cost.

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Applicants respectfully contend that the cited references fail to provide a motivation for modifying the seal of Granau by combining it with the clip with keyways and shoulder with keys of Law. Granau uses a bushing 18 to prevent rotation of the seal, and therefore, there is no motivation to modify the seal of Granau as suggested.

Additionally, Applicants respectfully contend that neither Granau nor Law discloses or suggests an anti-rotational element integrally formed in the seal (as conceded by the Examiner with respect to Law). Moreover, even if, arguendo, Law teaches an anti-rotational element integrally formed on the back surface of another element (the clip), the cited references still fail to disclose or suggest an anti-rotational element integrally formed in a seal.

Applicants respectfully contend that claim 1 as amended is also allowable because it includes another feature that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references, namely "a resilient substantially tubular seal disposed between the line and the line duct, the seal being introducible at least partially into the line duct." In Granau, a non-tubular packing (seal) 16 is disposed between a screw nut 14 and a cable (line) 20. Thus in Granau, the seal and line duct do not overlap, and the seal is created by a line contact. Moreover, Granau emphasizes that the conical taper of the packing is essential (see Col. 2, lines 13-18). Thus, Granau actually teaches away from a substantially tubular seal.

Claims 2-5 and 7-12 depend from claim 1 and Applicants respectfully contend that they are allowable for the reasons that claim 1 is allowable.

Applicants respectfully contend that Claim 13, as amended, is allowable because it includes features that are neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references, namely a resilient substantially tubular body "engagingly received by the inner surface of the line duct." The Office Action of October 18, 2004 argues that, as originally presented, Claim 13 contained

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language that was considered intended use. As amended, Claim 13 clearly recites the line duct and the inner surface as well as the structural relationship of the resilient substantially tubular body being engagingly received by the inner surface of the line duct. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully contend that the resilient substantially tubular body received by the inner surface of the line duct is a clearly recited structural feature that is neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references. The Office Action further argues that Granau teaches a resilient tubular member between the line and the line duct (where 16 is a substantially tubular form and is placed between a line 20 and a duct 12). Applicants respectfully contend that Granau read as a whole clearly teaches a unitary seal 16 that is not substantially tubular but rather has a cylindrical portion and a conical portion. Modifying the seal of Granau to eliminate the conical portion would render it unfit for its intended purpose.

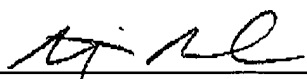
Moreover, Applicants respectfully disagree that Granau discloses that packing 16 is a substantially tubular form and is placed between a line 20 and a duct 12. As clearly shown in Fig. 1 and described at col. 2, lines 51-58, the packing 16 is placed between the line and the screw nut 26 and abuts the socket 12.

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Conclusion

For all the foregoing reasons and in view of the forgoing amendments, Applicants respectfully contend that the application is now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request entry of the foregoing amendments, allowance of claims 1-5 and 7-13 and issuance of Letters Patent for the subject invention. Please charge any additional requisite fees relating to this amendment and response to Deposit Account No. 50-1581.

Respectfully submitted,



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